

# Secret Messages in Schumann's Music: A Study of the Influence of German Literature and Cipher on the Music of Robert Schumann

By  
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Shuyi Guan

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Chair: Steven Spooner

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Colin Roust

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Michael Kirkendoll

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Boris Vayner

---

Glenn Prescott

Date Defended: 4 September 2018

The dissertation committee for Shuyi Guan certifies that this is the  
approved version of the following dissertation:

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Chair: Steven Spooner

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## Abstract

As with romanticism's metaphysical nature, the genres of art in the late eighteenth and nineteenth century were an amalgamation of different art forms and a tapestry of figures and thoughts from music, philosophy, poetic writings, and utopian ideologies. Art itself was viewed as limitless and provided infinite possibilities of expression. The dualism in romantic expression often oscillated between abstraction and sensuality, and as a result, there was almost never a sole art form expressing a single feeling or a thought. Exploring the secret messages hidden within Schumann's piano music and their relationship with German literature and cryptography offers a deeper understanding of why Schumann's music is so contrasting and fragmented but still logical in a broader sense.

In this study, I reveal the relationship between romanticism and Schumann's music, and explain how ideas from literary romanticism transformed Schumann's compositional techniques. Excerpts from *Davidsbündlertänze*, op. 6, *Carnaval*, op. 9, and *Kreisleriana*, op. 16 serve as examples of Schumann's connection between his tonal language and specific literary sources. In the first chapter, I examine the narrative strategies of Jean Paul that Schumann replicated in his music, including paired characters, defamiliarization, teleology, digression plotting, humor-contrast and the German rhetorical device *Wit*. The second chapter turns to the influence of E.T.A. Hoffmann and examines *Kreisleriana* as an illustration of the confluence between the two figures' works. In the third chapter, I discuss the secret messages veiled in Schumann's music, especially through cryptography and special meaningful quotations from other composers. Through the study and examination of literature and non-musical elements present in Schumann's work, a more comprehensive view of the composer and his music emerges.

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## Introduction

Robert Schumann was born in the small town of Zwickau, Saxony. He began studying piano with Johann Gottfried Kuntsch at the age of seven, and his talents soon developed beyond his age. As the son of a book seller and publisher, he spent most of his youth surrounded by literature. His father, August Schumann valued education and fostered his son's reading habits. August thoroughly believed that literature bound Germany together as a nation and he passed his passion for German literature down to the young Robert.<sup>1</sup> Robert's dedication to reading led him to attend a literary club in 1825, when he seriously started to dive into German literature. The literary club's emphasis on works by German authors introduced Schumann to such major figures as Friedrich Schlegel, Jean Paul, and E.T.A. Hoffmann. He felt a strong emotional connection with late-eighteenth-century literature. In fact, Schumann intended to become a poet before he dedicated his life to music: "Already in my earliest years I always felt compelled to produce, if not music, then poetry, and I enjoyed a happiness just as great as any I've since felt."<sup>2</sup> Schumann's fascination with literature, manifested itself in his characteristic compositional devices. A combination of the two disciplines, his music is not just an equivalent to German literature, but it is literature itself.<sup>3</sup>

Among German writers, Jean Paul and Hoffmann are the two who had the greatest impact on Schumann's compositional style and his perception of art. Through the dualistic forces in Jean Paul's and Hoffmann's novels, Schumann identified himself as a person. Duality runs throughout most of his piano cycles in distinctive ways, such as the two iconic characters

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<sup>1</sup> John Daverio, *Robert Schumann: Herald of a "New Poetic Age,"* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 21.

<sup>2</sup> Richard Ellman, "Freud and Literary Biography," in *Along the River Run: Selected Essays* (New York: Harper, 1989), 260.

<sup>3</sup> Christopher William Mechell, "Through a Literary Lens: The Effect of Jean Paul and E.T.A. Hoffmann's Writing Styles on the Compositional Techniques of Robert Schumann" (DMA diss., University of Washington, 2016), 7, <https://search-proquest-com.www2.lib.ku.edu/docview/1804413907?accountid=14556>.

Eusebius and Florestan, or dual tonalities. Jean Paul's and Hoffmann's narrative strategies and metaphysical states of mind also contributed to Schumann's compositional style. Furthermore, the overt display of romantic irony and the power of consciousness in Jean Paul's often oddly mysterious works propelled Schumann to incorporate the use of ciphers and symbolic motives to encode meanings and expression in his music.

In this study, I explore the secret messages hidden in Schumann's piano works. I discuss their relation to German literature and cryptography, highlighting how Schumann utilized various devices to unify fragmentary and allusive thoughts into a larger work. To explicate the relationship between the music and literature, I analyze excerpts from three of Schumann's early works: *Davidsbündlertänze*, op. 6, *Carnaval*, op. 9, and *Kreisleriana*, op. 16.

The first chapter focuses on the narrative strategies of Jean Paul's writing and the correlation between the characters in Jean Paul's novels and Schumann's music. Borrowing from Jean Paul, Schumann incorporated aspects of dualism, defamiliarization, digression, teleology, *Humor*, and *Witz* into his music. He was drawn to the contrasting paired characters in Jean Paul's novels. Schumann often wrote phrases that were interrupted by a contrasting character, his witty ideas mirroring the dualism of Jean Paul's works.

The second chapter of this study examines the confluence of Hoffmann's literature and Schumann's music. Schumann's music is not programmatic, just as Hoffmann's style is not chronological. Structurally, both of their works are unified by digression, where each section functions on its own but subtly creates unity in a larger structure. Moreover, the alter ego in Hoffmann's creation makes Schumann see himself in a new way. *Kreisleriana* reveals Schumann's thoughts on Hoffmann's theory about music presenting itself in literature. The character of Kapellmeister Kreisler is often viewed with a binary identity encompassing deeply



felt emotions and bitter sneering irony. Even though there are no names or initials to show the evidence of the personas Florestan and Eusebius, the eight movements have various tempo markings, characteristics, and structure that imply these alter egos in Schumann's *Kreisleriana*.

Schumann also liked to play with ciphers to imbed meaning within his works. In the third chapter, I show how Schumann used a special theme or quotation from other composers to express the meaning of his music. I also discuss how Schumann infused his works with extra-musical elements such as cryptic ciphers and I provide examples from *Carnaval*, *Faschingsschwank aus Wien*, and *Fantasie*.

Schumann's music has long been considered to have irrational and illogical fragments that many performers have difficulties grasping and interpreting. The overabundance of riddles and dense imaginations make his music less accessible to audiences. For this reason, I explain Schumann's secret messages in an effort to help people develop a greater understanding of his music and him as a person. It is fascinating how Schumann represented German literature, incorporated ciphers, and portrayed characters in his piano works. As a performer who adores Schumann's music, I feel obliged to discover a greater understanding of Schumann, and I aim to inspire a higher appreciation of Schumann's music.

## Chapter 1: Jean Paul and Schumann

*Music would be a very limited art if it  
offered only sounds and neither a  
language nor signs for states of soul.*

—Robert Schumann,  
*Gesammelten Schriften über Musik und Musiker*

As in romanticism's metaphysical nature, the genres of art in the late eighteenth and nineteenth century were an amalgamation of different art forms and a tapestry of figures and thoughts from music, philosophy, poetic writings, and utopian ideologies. Art itself was viewed as limitless and provided infinite possibilities of expression. The dualism in romantic expression often oscillated between abstraction and sensuality. As a result, there was almost never a sole art form expressing a single feeling or a thought. Alfred Einstein said, "Like all the other Romantics, Schumann loved the mask so that behind it he might behave all the more sentimentally and exuberantly."<sup>4</sup> Although Schumann's music was not programmatic with a clear storyline throughout, there were still influences from literature and his personal life.

As one of the leading German writers, Jean Paul was deeply influenced by romanticism. His style emerged after experiencing a series of difficult events early in his life, including financial struggles after his father's death. The idea of Enlightenment by philosophers Karl Philipp Moritz and Friedrich Wilhelm von Meyern fascinated Jean Paul and the influence of which is especially prevalent in his novels *Hesperus* (1794–5) and *Titan* (1800).<sup>5</sup> The plot in *Hesperus* was very similar to Meyern's *Dya-Na-Sore, oder die Wanderer*, as they both included a hermit and a secret society. The spiritual mentor Emanuel was a highly developed figure based

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<sup>4</sup> Alfred Einstein, *Music in the Romantic Era* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company Inc., 1947), 207.

<sup>5</sup> Erika Reiman, *Schumann's Piano Cycles and the Novels of Jean Paul* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2004), 30-31.

on two real life models—Moritz and Jean Paul’s friend Emanuel Osmund.<sup>6</sup> After the success of *Hesperus*, there were three major works that catapulted his career: *Titan*, *Siebenkäs* (1796–97), and *Flegeljahre* (1804–5). According to Schumann’s diary entries, he read these works closely and they influenced his perspective of art and music. *Titan* was written in a unique style where Jean Paul presented the narrative in digression, a process where he disassembled the original order of events and reordered them in an idiosyncratic way.

Perhaps Jean Paul’s simplest method of disorienting the reader is his own personal contribution to his narratives. He is by no means a passive reporter of his own storylines, but comments constantly on events, characters, and circumstances, and frequently expresses his own wishes for a character’s future as if the story’s outcome were not under his control.<sup>7</sup>

Mimicking Jean Paul’s digressive interpolations, Schumann composed in a similar way.

Schumann’s *Papillon*, op. 2, was inspired by Jean Paul’s digressive work *Flegeljahre*. In an essay in *Die Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, Schumann articulated his fascination with contradictory and abundant unnatural plots and his belief that oddly-developed characters contributed to the success of a work.<sup>8</sup> *Siebenkäs* was one of Schumann’s favorite novels, in which Jean Paul explored new possibilities with characters through the new invention he called *Doppeltgänger*. Though the term has come to be better known today as *Doppelgänger*, a lookalike or double of a living person, Jean Paul used the term to refer to a psychological state in which people see themselves in others.<sup>9</sup>

Jean Paul is regarded as the most significant writer who influenced Schumann’s compositional style. Schumann was so obsessed with his writing that he would read Jean Paul’s

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<sup>6</sup> Reiman, *Schumann’s Piano Cycles*, 22-23.

<sup>7</sup> Reiman, *Schumann’s Piano Cycles*, 28.

<sup>8</sup> Daverio, *Robert Schumann*, 26.

<sup>9</sup> Javier Saavedra Macías and Rafael Velez Núñez, “The Other Self: Psychopathology and Literature,” *Journal of Medical Humanities* 34, no. 4 (2011): 260, <https://doi-org.www2.lib.ku.edu/10.1007/s10912-011-9148-2>.

works outside the literary study groups. In terms of personalities, they shared similar qualities, as they were both fascinated by dualistic and odd characters, puzzles, strange plots, and infinite imaginations. Schumann and Jean Paul also liked to collect and record random thoughts about books or internal thoughts in their daily life.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, both Jean Paul and Schumann admired Franz Schubert. Schumann often sight-read Schubert's music, and frequently compared Schubert to Jean Paul in diary entries.<sup>11</sup> In a letter to his future wife, Schumann wrote, "Schubert is still my 'one and only Schubert,' especially since he has everything in common with my 'one and only' Jean Paul; when I play Schubert, it's as if I were reading a novel 'composed' by Jean Paul."<sup>12</sup>

Jean Paul's writings often involved supernatural elements related to and associated with dreams, unresolved conflicts, and highly complicated plots with pervasive and ironic sense of humor. Aspects of this structure parallel Schumann's music. Reiman have connected Schumann's plot development and structural process to Jean Paul's narrative construction.<sup>13</sup> Schumann even mentioned that he "learned more counterpoint from Jean Paul than from his music teachers."<sup>14</sup> His intimate familiarity with Jean Paul's works is clearly evident in his diary entries,

I have often asked myself where I would be if I'd ever known Jean Paul; but he seems to be entwined with at least one side of me... I would perhaps write in just the same way, but I wouldn't flee others' company as much, and I'd dream less... I can't exactly imagine what I would be... I can't puzzle out the question... Jean Paul portrays himself in all of his works, but always in two characters... The one and only Jean Paul is alone capable of containing two such different characters within himself; it is superhuman, but

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<sup>10</sup> Reiman, *Schumann's Piano Cycles*, 12.

<sup>11</sup> Reiman, *Schumann's Piano Cycles*, 34.

<sup>12</sup> Daverio, *Robert Schumann*, 48.

<sup>13</sup> Reiman, *Schumann's Piano Cycles*, 34. .

<sup>14</sup> Reiman, *Schumann's Piano Cycles*, 2.

he is indeed superhuman—there are always stark contrasts, if not extremes, united in his work and himself—yet it is he alone.<sup>15</sup>

Jean Paul's *Titan*, *Siebenkäs*, and *Flegeljahre* all focus on a symbolic feature of opposite dualistic forces. "The notion of music [as] confession finds sustenance in the writings of Schumann himself who as a young man wrote of his favorite author, 'In all his works Jean Paul mirrors himself, but always as two persons: he is Albano and Schoppe in *Titan*, Siebenkäs and Leihgeber in *Siebenkäs*, and Vult and Walt in *Flegeljahre*.'" <sup>16</sup> The idea of body-mind dualism mainly came from Descartes's philosophical writings, in which two distinct and separable components worked together as a whole. This kind of dualism was often a symbolic device in the romantic period. Each component worked individually on its own, but they also functioned together towards a unified, mutual goal, just as the human mind is nonphysical and separate from the human body.<sup>17</sup>

Scholars believe Schumann's invention of two characters, Eusebius and Florestan, was a representation of Walt and Vult, the polar-opposite twins in Jean Paul's *Flegeljahre*.<sup>18</sup> Walt had a gentle, romantic, introverted personality similar to Eusebius's, and Vult, was an eccentric, hot-tempered, passionate character, born unexpectedly after his brother, paralleling Florestan. These two characters appear in *Carnaval* and *Davidstbündlertänze* as movement titles or as the inscription at the end of movements. In *Carnaval*, Schumann gave Florestan a new birth, as he quoted the theme from *Papillon*, not only as a reference to the novel *Flegeljahre*, but also to echo the character of the introverted Eusebius. Though Schumann does not give an individual

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<sup>15</sup> Robert Schumann, *Briefe: Neue Folge*, 2nd ed., ed. F. Gustav Jansen (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1904), 53-54, [https://kuprimo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=TN\\_hathi\\_trusthvd.32044041158080&context=PC&vid=KU&search\\_scope=QUICK&tab=default\\_tab&lang=en\\_US](https://kuprimo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=TN_hathi_trusthvd.32044041158080&context=PC&vid=KU&search_scope=QUICK&tab=default_tab&lang=en_US).

<sup>16</sup> Daverio, *Robert Schumann*, 10.

<sup>17</sup> Mechell, "Through a Literary Lens," 7.

<sup>18</sup> See for example Reiman, *Schumann's Piano Cycles*, 89.

movement to each character in *Davidsbündlertänze*, he successfully represented these two figures through the contrasting plots and lively writing.

Musicologist Erika Reiman highlighted two significant factors shared between Schumann's compositional approach and Jean Paul's novels.<sup>19</sup> The first one was defamiliarization, defined by literary theorist Viktor Shklovskii as "Art as Device." Defamiliarization is the term for taking a familiar scene in daily life and placing it in a strange setting, in an effort to evoke the expectation from the normalness. It also provides a new point of view. Especially in his early cycles, Schumann "incorporates the defamiliarization of conventional, familiar musical tactics to produce the surprising, often disorienting results."<sup>20</sup> Another method used by Jean Paul and Schumann which is a subset of defamiliarization, is "the critical opposition of story and plot."<sup>21</sup> The stories or events happened in a chronological order, but the narrative was told in non-chronological way. In both *Carnaval* and *Davidsbündlertänze*, Schumann employs a waltz to represent his favorite composer Franz Schubert. The reborn waltz is entirely transformed by Schumann through defamiliarization with duple vs. triple meter conflict, digression and abrupt character changes.<sup>22</sup> For example, in *Davidsbündlertänze*, though the movements are not titled as in *Carnaval*, the distinctive characters set them apart as they alternate between Eusebius and Florestan. Besides, they are also separated by the waltz and non-waltz figures. The waltz sections are defamiliarized by Schumann's unconventional techniques. In the middle section of movement 3, the waltz accompaniment gets interrupted by a hemiola when the triple meter suddenly shifts to duple, while the character of the music momentarily mirrors Eusebius (see Figure 1). In movement 4, the syncopated melody has offbeat accents

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<sup>19</sup> Reiman, *Schumann's Piano Cycles*, 4.

<sup>20</sup> Reiman, *Schumann's Piano Cycles*, 4.

<sup>21</sup> Reiman, *Schumann's Piano Cycles*, 4.

<sup>22</sup> Reiman, *Schumann's Piano Cycles*, 124-129.

against the bass note on the down beats and is accompanied by the waltz figure in the left hand (see Figure 2). The technique of unsynchronized hands recurs in movement 6, when the craziness of the tarantella is featured with the opposite articulation in both hands.

Figure 1: *Davidsbündlertänze*, op. 6, mvmt. 3, mm 39–54



Figure 2: *Davidsbündlertänze*, op. 6, mvmt. 4, mm. 1–15



Another one of Jean Paul's narrative strategies was what he called digression, which allowed him to alternate from one character to another character.

It is not that Jean Paul was unable to tell a story well; on the contrary, he stubbornly refused to adhere to the accepted principles of unity of plot, if only because he passionately believed that life itself was a motley, variegated affair. Hence the plethora of digressions, excursions, embeddings, interpolations and appendices, however disorienting they may be, serves to affirm what was an essentially epic world view.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Daverio, *Robert Schumann*, 37.

His writing was so difficult to follow that Jean Paul even made jokes about the narrative's complexity. His use of digression also functioned as a psychological state. According to Reiman, this phenomenon was frequently employed in *Titan*.<sup>24</sup> For example, when Albano discovered that he lost his love Liane, the passage is followed by a two-page metaphor about a scorpion's tails and a torn-down castle. The metaphor is obviously unrelated to the event itself, yet it creates a mental state with a strong and colorful emotional undertone. Schumann, on the other hand, drowned himself in Jean Paul's works, as they mirrored aspects of himself interwoven with his inner being. Schumann frequently switched between characters from phrase to phrase. He would also insert an interlude between sections that seemed to be displaced and barely had any connection to the sections before and after it. Even within a section, the phrases frequently interrupted with alternative possibilities.

Similar to the theory of dualism, the teleological narrative of Jean Paul's works enabled readers to uncover meanings over the course of extended passages. It was another romantic approach to writing that focused more on a goal-directed process and required readers to understand individual parts from a distanced perspective so "things only start to make sense when the entire artistic creation's overall structure and form become apparent."<sup>25</sup> Scholar Anthony Newcomb pointed out Schumann's adoption of Jean Paul's narrative habits to avoid linear narratives and the teleological metaphor serving an important position in most of his music.<sup>26</sup> The concept of teleology exists within many of Schumann's large character pieces. In such large-scale works, despite the digressive passages inserted to interrupt the continuity,

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<sup>24</sup> Reiman, *Schumann's Piano Cycles*, 30-31.

<sup>25</sup> Mechell, "Through a Literary Lens," 7-8.

<sup>26</sup> Anthony Newcomb, "Schumann and Late Eighteenth-Century Narrative Strategies." *19<sup>th</sup>- Century Music* 4, no. 2 (Autumn 1987): 169, <https://doi-org.www2.lib.ku.edu/10.2307/746729>.



Schumann often purposefully seeded hints along the way to captivate the audience, gradually unfolding the truth to reveal a broader picture.

Schumann's *Davidsbündlertänze*, op. 6, is a prime example of how he held a larger structure together through individual and independent sequential movements. A partial second movement recalling the past is inserted at the end of the cycle in book II as movement 8. However, instead of simply copying the ternary form, Schumann decided to keep developing new material into the coda section. Just like life, memory comes back, but people change after encountering different people and experiencing different phases in life. The movement suggests that there will always be a new pathway forward. Suddenly, all the content and characters from the past, start to take shape and make sense. In this movement, music is presented in parallel key relationships (B major/ B minor), highlighting another technique of Schubert's that Schumann borrowed.

Musicologist John Daverio theorized that Jean Paul's writings utilized three spirits:

*Gemüth* (Feeling), *Humor* (Humor), and *Witz* (Wit).<sup>27</sup> Daverio said,

The terms recur frequently in Schumann's writings, and often in connection with Jean Paul, as in a letter to Simonoin de Sire, where "Humor" is described as the successful fusion of the *Gemüth* und *Witz*.<sup>28</sup>

By overthrowing a new idea to a fixed concept, *Humor* implies the concept of duality; the contrast is created through "finitude to the infinite."<sup>29</sup> *Humor* was also adapted as two figures in Jean Paul's novels: the "high" style characterized by enthusiastic, passionate linguistic style and the "low" style that is more reflective of the inner being. Schumann was obsessed with the idea of *Humor*, and he used it pervasively in his piano cycles. For example, in the

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<sup>27</sup> John Daverio, "Reading Schumann by Way of Jean Paul and His Contemporaries." *College Music Symposium* 30, no.2 (October 1, 1990): 37, <http://www.jstor.org/www2.lib.ku.edu/stable/40374041>.

<sup>28</sup> Daverio, "Reading Schumann," 38-39.

<sup>29</sup> Daverio, "Reading Schumann," 38-39.

*Davidsbündlertänze*, he divided each movement into two characters—Florestan and Eusebius—and varied the two characters over the course of the cycle.

The idea of *Witz* that Daverio addressed came from Friedrich Schlegel, as *Witz* was a chief term in Schlegel's critical arsenal. *Witz* is a combinatory method linking fragments together as unified whole. Daverio asserted *Witz* "is necessary in order to grasp the hidden coherence... [and the] composer should not necessarily restrict the appearance of an idea to a single movement, but should rather 'conceal it,' make abstruse and varied allusions to it, in subsequent movements as well."<sup>30</sup> Reiman argued that the *Witz* Daverio addressed was merely a supplementary idea conceptualized by Schlegel that partially reflected the larger scheme of Jean Paul's art of comparison. As one of the three big categories of this particular sort of comparison, Jean Paul defines his own *Witz* as a façade of obvious differences, behind which the subtle similarities hide.<sup>31</sup> Schumann's music, especially the large-scale works, was often held together by subtle motives. For example, a rhythmic motive from an early movement might reoccur in a later movement, or the entire movement might repeat at the end of the piece.

Schumann not only admired Jean Paul's poetic writing style but adapted the abstract ideas into his music. Schumann's music was literature itself, but he also wrote prolifically as a young man in Leipzig. After moving to Heidelberg, Schumann focused mainly on musical pursuits and piano playing. He was enamored with the cultural possibilities of musical virtuosity surrounding him, and his love of literature seeped into his work, transforming his music into literature. Scholars and performers alike equate certain aspects of Schumann's compositional technique to literature, like his works that were composed in a continuous manner and are conventionally performed *attacca*. Works that are through-composed continuously developed as

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<sup>30</sup> Daverio, "Reading Schumann," 34.

<sup>31</sup> Reiman, *Schumann's Piano Cycles*, 16.

he introduced new ideas and motives without pauses or breaks in between. It is equivalent to Jean Paul's use of "dash." Pianist Christopher William Mechell noted "When reading a passage that uses a dash, the reader is told 'to go on.' In music, through-composition is an equivalent in that there is no convenient 'period' or ending to the musical sentence and the listener has no choice but 'to go on.'"<sup>32</sup> A continuation between movements often appeared in Schumann's multi-movement cycles. Even though Schumann did not mark *attacca*, there are often strong links between movements. For example, in *Carnaval*, op. 9, Schumann did not firmly end the movement but instead created a sense of continuity, flowing into the subsequent movement. It is possible that "A.S.C.H-S.C.H.A." and "Chiarina" are often misunderstood as one movement, since Schumann avoided writing a perfect authentic cadence but instead leaves the end of the movement unresolved (see Figure 3). Another example in *Carnaval* is at the end of Florestan, where it ends with a diminished seventh chord. The seventh chord functions as an elision to the next movement that begins with an appropriate conclusion and cadence, resolving the previous section.

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<sup>32</sup> Mechell, "Through a Literary Lens," 40.

Figure 3 *Carnaval*, op. 9, “A.S.C.H.S.C.H.A.,” mm. 17–32; “Chiarina,” mm.1–5



In summary, the influence from Jean Paul’s narrative strategies were presented through Schumann’s music in many different ways; especially the way dualistic characters were foiled in a digressive narrative that created the contrasting and fragmented structure. Schumann successfully incorporated Jean Paul’s *Humor* and Schlegel’s conception of *Witz* into his music writing in which the music is contrasting while coherent by the witty elaborations.

## Chapter 2: E.T.A Hoffmann and Schumann's *Kreisleriana*, op. 16

*Evenings reading damned ETA Hoffmann...  
hateful, disgusting basic idea. Idea for  
poetic biography of Hoffmann. One can  
hardly breathe when one reads Hoffmann.*  
—Robert Schumann, *Tagebücher*

In addition to Jean Paul, the German writer E.T.A. Hoffmann was another person who deeply influenced and shaped Schumann's music style, especially through the fictional character Kapellmeister Johannes Kreisler. Schumann read Hoffmann in his youth, but his works gradually regained Schumann's interest in the 1830s, around the time he composed his piano cycles. The character Kreisler, upon whom Schumann's *Kreisleriana*, op. 16 was based, appeared in many of Hoffmann's extent works, including: *The Kreisleriana Essay* (1814-15) and his last but unfinished novel, *The Life and Opinion of The Tomcat Murr: Together with a Fragmentary Biography of Kapellmeister Johannes Kreisler on Random Sheets of Waste Paper* (1820-22). Similar to Jean Paul's concept of dualism, the character Kreisler and Tomcat Murr stand on the opposite sides of the spectrum. According to pianist and scholar Lora Deahl,

Murr, the egotistical philistine with disreputably bourgeois tastes, the blatant plagiarist and charlatan extraordinaire, is a bizarre caricature of the sensitive Kreisler, whose untampered idealism renders him unfit for existence in the empirical world. And yet, on a deeper level, common themes weave threads of continuity between the narrative strands, for the literate pseudo philosopher cat is certainly as much of an outcast in cat society as Kreisler is in the world of men. Disappointed romances, brutal duels, epiphanic revelations, and discarded dreams haunt both the poet-artist Kreisler and his ironic double, Murr.<sup>33</sup>

The idea of duality also appeared in "Johannes Kreisler's Certificate of Apprenticeship," an epistolary short story consisting of a letter that Kreisler wrote to himself. "And so I, like you,

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<sup>33</sup> Lora Deahl, "Robert Schumann's *Kreisleriana* and Double Novel Structure," *International Journal of Musicology* 5 (1996): 134, <https://doi-org.www2.lib.ku.edu/10.1093/mq/73.2.172>.

sign myself, Johannes Kreisler,” shows the split personalities within Kreisler himself.<sup>34</sup> Dualism in Schumann’s *Kreisleriana* was not only presented in the character change between movements, but also influenced the key relationships. Scholars believe there are two primary keys areas related to the dualistic characters and show the literary parallel in Schumann’s music.<sup>35</sup> Even though Schumann did not specifically note or articulate two characters like Eusebius and Florestan at the end of each movement in *Davidsbündlertänze*, there are certainly two keys that represent contrasting characters. Deahl used the term *Stimmungen* (affective states of mind) to describe the phenomenon.<sup>36</sup> The G-minor passages represent a furious, passionate, and rhythmic character, and are usually presented in a fast tempo. In contrast, the B-flat-major sections embody a realistic, reflective, quiet figure, and are marked with a much slower tempo.

The body of the work, like the novel, consists of alternations between two kinds of music which are as different from each other as Schumann could write—one cast in Bb-major and the other in the relative key of G minor. What unfolds is analogous in structure to Hoffmann’s book, that is, a double cycle.<sup>37</sup>

In this instance, the second movement contains a prime example of how Schumann utilized the key relationship to parallel Hoffmann’s split character *Doppelgänger*. Within the movement, Schumann alternated between two characters by presenting each in different sections. The piece starts with an inward, quiet section in B-flat major, followed by a rhythmic, non-lyrical *Intermezzo* in F major, the dominant of B-flat major. After repeating the B-flat-major section, *Intermezzo II* is suddenly interrupted with a breathless and fearless flowing passage in G

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<sup>34</sup> E.T.A. Hoffmann and David Charlton, *E.T.A. Hoffmann’s Musical Writing: Kreisleriana, The Poet and the Composer, Music Criticism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 165.

<sup>35</sup> Deahl, “Robert Schumann’s *Kreisleriana*,” 5.

<sup>36</sup> Lora Deahl, “Principle of Organization in Robert Schumann’s *Davidsbündlertänze*, opus 6 and *Kreisleriana* opus 16” (DMA diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1988), 78-79, <https://search-proquest-com.www2.lib.ku.edu/docview/303732899?pq-origsite=primo>.

<sup>37</sup> Deahl, “Robert Schumann’s *Kreisleriana*,” 136.

minor. Though the next section moves temporarily to D minor (the relative minor of F major), it functions as retransition to B-flat major. The Theme and *Intermezzo II* are shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4: *Kreisleriana*, op. 16, mvmt. 2, mm. 1–16, mm. 72–76

2. *Sehr innig und nicht zu rasch*

Intermezzo 2  
Etwas bewegter 72

74

Alison Redman created a chart illustrating how these two keys were organized throughout the whole piece.

Table 1 Approximate Forms and Key Areas of *Kreisleriana*, op.16

I. Äussert bewegt

Measure numbers	1-24	25-49	50-73
Formal section	A	B	A
Key area	d	B <sub>b</sub>	d

II. Sehr innig und nicht zu rasch

Measure numbers	1-37	38-54	55-71	72-98	99-122	123-147	148-153
Formal section	A	B	A	C	transition	A	Coda
Key area	B <sub>b</sub>	F	B <sub>b</sub>	g	~	B <sub>b</sub>	B <sub>b</sub>

III. Sehr aufgeregt

Measure numbers	1-32	33-94	95-125	126-196
Formal section	A	B	A	Coda
Key area	g	B <sub>b</sub>	g	g

IV. Sehr langsam

Measure numbers	1-11	12-23	24-28
Formal section	A	B	A
Key area	B <sub>b</sub>	B <sub>b</sub> / g	B <sub>b</sub> → D

V. Sehr lebhaft

Measure numbers	1-52	53-123	123-161
Formal section	A	B	A
Key area	g	g	g (ends on V)

VI. Sehr langsam

Measure numbers	1-5	6-10	11-18	19-34	35-39
Formal section	A	B	A	C	A
Key area	B <sub>b</sub>	~	B <sub>b</sub>	V of B <sub>b</sub>	B <sub>b</sub>

VII. Sehr rasch

Measure numbers	1-9	10-33	34-41	42-70	71-82	83-90	91-118
Formal section	A	B	A	C	B	A	D
Key area	c	g	c	c	c	c	B <sub>b</sub> → E <sub>b</sub>

VIII. Schnell und spielend

Measure numbers	1-25	26-49	50-73	74-113	114-146
Formal section	A	B	A	C	A
Key area	g	B <sub>b</sub> ~	g	~	g

Source: Alison Redman, "Magical and Mysterious Resonances: Structural Principles in E. T. A. Hoffmann's Kreisler Works and Robert Schumann's *Kreisleriana*," (MA thesis, University of Denver, 2017), 13, <https://search-proquest-com.www2.lib.ku.edu/docview/1984983105/?pq-origsite=primo>.

The movements are mostly in B-flat major and movements 4 and 6 are marked *Sehr Langsam*. Both movements 4 and 6 share an intimate, harmonious, and dreamy quality. In the first edition of the work, movements 2, 4, and 6 were marked *Adagio*. This offers a performative suggestion related to the character of the movements.<sup>38</sup> In addition, Deahl discovered the appearance of dualism in the B-flat-major movements, as the B-flat-major section always

<sup>38</sup> Deahl, "Robert Schumann's *Kreisleriana*," 137.



shadowed the G-minor section.<sup>39</sup> As shown in Figure 5, the succession of seventh chords gradually leads to a dominant chord signaling the return to G minor in measure 10. The *Bewegter* section is not explicitly notated in B-flat major. The half cadence in measure 12 forecasts an upcoming G-minor cadence, which never happens. The avoidance of the cadence hints at Schumann's witty humor. As Redman suggested in her thesis, this movement is a microcosm of the whole work, which not only introduces the duality of the two key areas, but the key ambiguity also represents the "permeable identities of the characters in Hoffmann's works."<sup>40</sup>

Figure 5: *Kreisleriana*, op. 16, mvmt. 4, mm. 1-5



<sup>39</sup> Deahl, "Robert Schumann's *Kreisleriana*," 138.

<sup>40</sup> Alison Redman, "Magical and Mysterious Resonances: Structural Principles in E. T. A. Hoffmann's Kreisler Works and Robert Schumann's *Kreisleriana*," (MA thesis, University of Denver, 2017), 16, <https://search-proquest-com.www2.lib.ku.edu/docview/1984983105/?pq-origsite=primo>.

Movements 3, 5, and 8 in G minor resemble the irrational, tempestuous characters. The pace is rapid and always with digression. Musicologist Eric Sams asserted that Schumann's music contains "motifs that can appear or disappear, fly forward or backward, and assume an infinite variety shapes and colours."<sup>41</sup> Schumann was obsessed with the dotted rhythm and relentless dotted rhythms have become a staple of his music, functioning almost as a psychological state. The predominant use of the dotted rhythm in the G-minor movements creates the sense of nervousness. Especially in movement 5, the dotted rhythm is steadily used and almost dominates the movement, evoking a sense of anticipated excitement. The dotted rhythm gets interrupted by a chromatic sequential section as a part of digression, thus Schumann never disappoints the audience's expectations. Besides the dotted rhythm, Schumann uses a quirky rhythm throughout the piece to portray Kreisler's awkwardly eccentric personalities. For example, the rhythmic motive in movement 8 (Figure 6) is disturbingly repeated and shows both Kreisler and Schumann's unsettled manic psychological state. The jarring gesture is not only captured in the right hand's jerky rhythm, but also appears in the disjointed bass line with irregular accents on the weak beats. Especially heard with the repetition, the bass notes are either plunked at unpredictable moments or delayed and resolved on the offbeats. Schumann's succession of interesting rhythms reflects Kreisler's mental state. In Hoffmann's imagination of Kreisler, he was someone who was not only socially awkward, but a musician with mental disintegration.

Poor Johannes had been generally regarded as insane for some time, and to be sure, his doing and dealings, particularly his artistic activities, contrasted so sharply with all that is held to be reasonable and proper, that his mental disintegration could hardly be doubted. His thought-processes became increasingly eccentric and disjointed.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Eric Sams, "Schumann and the Tonal Analogue," in *Schumann*, ed. Alan Walker (London: Faber and Faber), 393.

<sup>42</sup> Hoffmann, *E.T.A. Hoffmann's Musical Writing*, 123.

Figure 6 *Kreisleriana*, op. 16, mvmt. 8, mm. 1–9



In movement 7, Schumann referenced Bach. Mechell identified the movement as “an infusion of digression styles and past forms.”<sup>43</sup> In Hoffmann’s *Kreisleriana*, he explored the admiration of Bach in the chapter “Extremely Random Thoughts.”

There are moments, especially when I have deeply studied the works of the great Sebastian Bach, at which the numerical proportions of music and the mystical rules of counterpoint arouse in me a profound horror. Music!<sup>44</sup>

Schumann easily combined the literary and musical influence to show both aspects representing the past to the present. The fugal section, however, was still under the shadow of Schumann’s virtuosic sense of manic passion. Even though the movement begins in C minor, the left hand provides a G pedal point, shown in Figure 7. This movement is a manifestation of Schumann’s humor. The concept of duality exists because G minor underpins the C-minor section. To parallel Kreisler’s *Doppelgänger*, Schumann inserted a contrasting B-flat-major chorale in the coda section to evoke the coexisting character within one being. The affective digression is written extremely intelligently and recollects a motive from the previous part of the movement.<sup>45</sup> In

<sup>43</sup> Mechell, “Through a Literary Lens,” 126.

<sup>44</sup> Hoffmann, *E.T.A. Hoffmann’s Musical Writing*, 105.

<sup>45</sup> Deahl, “Robert Schumann’s *Kreisleriana*,” 142.

Figure 7, Schumann reuses the rhythm from the beginning of the movement, now in a homophonic texture with an inverted melody taken from measure 7.

Figure 7: *Kreisleriana*, op.16, mvmt. 7, mm. 1–10, mm. 86–104

The image displays a musical score for Schumann's *Kreisleriana*, op. 16, movement 7. The score is presented in two systems, each consisting of two staves (treble and bass clef). The first system covers measures 1-10, and the second system covers measures 86-104. The music is in B-flat major and 3/4 time. The score features a homophonic texture with an inverted melody from measure 7. Red arrows and numbers (1-5) highlight specific melodic lines and fingerings. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'f' and 'p'.

Even though there is no indication of the dualistic characters marked on the score, Schumann's *Kreisleriana* resembles the characters of Hoffman's *Kreisler*, by juxtaposition of two keys—B flat major and G minor with contrasting tempo markings—to evoke the *Doppelgänger* within one being. The dual personality also depicted Schumann's digression from one character to another character. In addition, Schumann also used the dotted rhythm to depict

the eccentric personalities of Kreisler in multiple movements. If Hoffmann gives Kreisler a life, then Schumann vividly mirrors him from his work and himself.

### Chapter 3: Schumann's Secret Message and Cipher

*Like all the other Romantics, he loved the mask, so that behind it he might behave all the more sentimentally and exuberantly.*

—Alfred Einstein, *Music in the Romantic Era*

Schumann was a composer who liked to hide the truth intentionally, and it is up to the performer to decode the ciphers throughout his music. He believed that music was much less effective when the inner feelings were directly explained before being heard. This was also related to the concept of romantic irony, in that romantics

no longer believed in unconscious natural genius; they demanded that artistic self-consciousness and reason not merely accompany but actually control poetic inspiration. They held that the poet should not lose himself in his work, but should always retain an apposition above it and above himself.<sup>46</sup>

Romantic irony happens when a previous illusion presented is not true after all or will be contradicted. Musicologist Heinz Dill mentioned that Schumann might have related to the definition of romantic irony, he has compared his music to the “poem” with consciousness, rather than “a flower” coming from “impulse of crude nature.”<sup>47</sup> Schumann thought music should speak for itself as what it is; instead of excessive over expressing. He advocated a self-reflection with a high level of intellect; “An art which lifts mankind above life, as above the sea; which, instead of engulfing and destroying us, mirrors us flying genii.”<sup>48</sup> In other words, the impulsive “crude nature” is not engulfing enough without the consciousness or controlling intellect, in which, Schumann would use network of signs and symbols, such as movement titles, motives or tempo, as a secret language to express.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Walter Silz, *Early German Romanticism: Its Founders and Heinrich von Kleist* (Cambridge, 1929), 178.

<sup>47</sup> Heinz J. Dill and Robert Schumann, “Romantic Irony in the Works of Robert Schumann,” *The Musical Quarterly* 73, no.2 (1989): 175-176, <https://doi-org.www2.lib.ku.edu/10.1093/mq/73.2.172>.

<sup>48</sup> Robert Schumann, *On Music and Musicians*, ed. Konrad Wolff, trans. Paul Rosenfeld (New York, 1969), 260.

<sup>49</sup> Dill and Schumann, “Romantic Irony,” 175-176.

In Schumann's *Kreisleriana*, op.16, the juxtaposition of two keys resembles Hoffmann's Kerisler and his *Doppelgänger*, thus the alternating tonality becomes an organizational indicator featured throughout the piece. In addition to the alter egos, Schumann also used the Clara Theme to unify the structure of the piece. Like the dotted rhythm theme, the Clara Theme was another iconic symbol that Schumann's successively quoted in various configurations throughout many of his works. It appeared in the beginning of the *Fantasie*, op. 17 (Figure 8). The Clara Theme (a stepwise melody) was Schumann's longing for Clara's love after being apart from her. The Clara Theme was a five-note melody that could be written in four different ways depending on the construction of cipher tables: C-B $\flat$ -A-G-F (the most common one), C-B $\flat$ -A-G $\sharp$ -A, C-B-C-G $\sharp$ -A, and A $\sharp$ -G $\sharp$ -A-B-C.<sup>50</sup> The stepwise motive was quoted in a different format in each movement of *Kreisleriana* (Figure 9-16).<sup>51</sup>

Figure 8: *Fantasie*, op.17, mvmt. 1, mm. 1-7



<sup>50</sup> Eric Sams, "The Schumann Ciphers," *The Musical Times* 107, no. 1479 (May 1966): 392-393, 395-400, <https://doi-org.www2.lib.ku.edu/10.2307/954112>.

<sup>51</sup> Mary Hunter Arnsdorf, "Schumann's *Kreisleriana*, opus 16: Analysis and Performance" (Ed.D. diss., Columbia University, 1976), 176, <https://search-proquest-com.www2.lib.ku.edu/docview/288245035/?pq-origsite=primo>.

Figure 9: *Kreisleriana*, op. 16, mvmt. 1, mm. 9–14, mm. 25–32, Clara Theme

The image displays three systems of musical notation for the Clara Theme from Schumann's *Kreisleriana*, op. 16, mvmt. 1. The first system covers measures 9–14, the second system covers measures 25–32, and the third system covers measures 28–32. The notation is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The first system (measures 9–14) features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a melodic line with slurs and accents, marked with *sf* (sforzando) and *f* (forte). The bass staff has a harmonic accompaniment with slurs and accents, also marked with *sf*. Red boxes highlight specific notes in the bass staff: measure 10 (F4), measure 11 (E4), measure 12 (D4), and measure 13 (C4). The second system (measures 25–32) also has a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a melodic line with slurs and accents, marked with *pp* (pianissimo) and *f*. The bass staff has a harmonic accompaniment with slurs and accents, marked with *pp*. Red boxes highlight specific notes in the treble staff: measure 25 (F4), measure 26 (E4), measure 27 (D4), and measure 28 (C4). The third system (measures 28–32) has a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a melodic line with slurs and accents, marked with *f*. The bass staff has a harmonic accompaniment with slurs and accents, marked with *f*. The word "Pedal" is written below the bass staff in the second system.



Figure 10: *Kreisleriana*, op. 16, mvmt. 2, mm. 1–10, mm. 99–108, Clara Theme

2. *Sehr innig und nicht zu rasch*

*mf* *f* *f* *p*

*Pedal*

6

*p*

*Pedal* *Pedal*

54 *Langsamer (erstes Tempo)*

99 *ritard.*

*p* *p*

*ritard.*

104 *p*

Figure 11: *Kreisleriana*, op. 16, mvmt. 3, mm. 33–44, Clara Theme

33 Etwas langsamer

*p*

*Pedal*

*s f*

l. H. r. H.

*Pedal*

39

*s f*

*Pedal*

*ritard.*

Figure 12: *Kreisleriana*, op. 16, mvmt. 4, mm. 1–2, mm. 14–19, mm. 26–28, Clara Theme

4.

Sehr langsam ( $\text{♩} = 66$ )

*p*

*Pedal*

14

17

*ritard.*

*pp*

26

*ritardando*

*Adagio*

*pp*

Figure 12: *Kreisleriana*, op. 16, mvmt. 5, mm. 1–14, Clara Theme

Sehr lebhaft  
pp

5

Pedal

10

1.

pp

Figure 13: *Kreisleriana*, op. 16, mvmt. 6, mm. 1–6, mm. 18–27, Clara Theme

50

6. Sehr langsam (♩ = 84)  
Durchaus leise zu halten  
pp

Pedal

4

ritard.

pp

Pedal

18

Etwas bewegter

ritard.

ritard.

23

ritard.

mf

p

Pedal

Figure 14: *Kreisleriana*, op. 16, mvmt. 7, mm. 38–48, mm. 91–108, Clara Theme

38

43

91

100

ritard.

*p*

Pedal

\*

Figure 15: *Kreisleriana*, op. 16, mvmt. 8, mm. 1–3, mm. 141–145, Clara Theme

8.

Schnell und spielend

*pp*

Pedal

Die Bässe durchaus leicht und frei

141

*ppp*

The piece's background explains the inclusion of Clara's Theme. *Kreisleriana* was written during a difficult time for the composer when Clara's father disapproved of Schumann's proposal to his daughter. In a letter to Clara, Schumann said, "You and the thought of you play the dominant role and I intend to dedicate to you, to you as to no one else. You will smile when you recognize yourself in [my work]...Play my *Kreisleriana* sometimes. You will find a wild, unbridled love there in places, together with your life and mine, and many of your glances."<sup>52</sup> *Kreisleriana* was one of Schumann's favorite pieces, it only took four days for him to complete the forty-minute work. Even with the literary influence on Schumann's *Kreisleriana*, the piece was utterly implying Robert's unhidden love towards his beloved Clara. Uncoincidentally, *Fantasie* was written around the same time, the quotation from Beethoven's last song cycle, *An die ferne Geliebte*, could also be considered a representation of Schumann's devotion to his beloved Clara, "Take, then, these songs which I have sung for you."<sup>53</sup>

Schumann's obsession with puzzles and ciphers may have started when he was a child as he spent most of the spare time in his father's library. Cotta, a publisher who had a close business relationship with Schumann's father owned Johann Ludwig Klüber's collection. It is possible that Robert read Klüber's *Kryptographik* and it generated his interests in ciphers.<sup>54</sup> Schumann liked to employ the non-musical elements to veil allusions in his musical interpretation. This shows his high-level control of expression corresponding to the idea of romantic irony. Schumann generated his cipher by assigning each letter to a specific note, adding sharps or flats increase the possibilities.<sup>55</sup> The theme of *Abegg Variations*, op.1 is an example of the how

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<sup>52</sup> Ronald Taylor, *Robert Schumann: His Life and Work* (London: Granada, 1985), 158.

<sup>53</sup> Taylor, *Robert Schumann*, 158.

<sup>54</sup> Sams, "The Schumann Ciphers," 392-93.

<sup>55</sup> Sams, "The Schumann Ciphers," 392.

Schumann enciphered musical letters directly into sound. “Schumann leaves a superscription with “Abegg” theme said “Je ne suis qu’un songe,” “I am but a dream” which is a quotation from Jean Paul.”<sup>56</sup> Meta Abegg is the person that Schumann’s title is referring to, but was there ever such a person that existed in history? Sams assumed that her title was an invention largely because Schumann suggested that it was a dream.<sup>57</sup> *Carnaval* is another example where Schumann utilized a cipher to convey a secret message referencing a different subject. In Sams’ study, he pointed out the riddle hidden inside movement 8, “Sphinxes,”

We think first of Greek or Egyptian myth but those Sphinxes asked riddles or kept secrets, whereas Schumann’s, on the contrary, answer riddles and disclose secret... In English or German, even in French, it means a moth or Papillion. And in *Carnaval* it means a meaningful musical idea.<sup>58</sup>

In addition, “ASCH” or the pitches A, E-flat, C, B, was another motive that Schumann frequently employed. These four letters represented the name of Schumann’s ex-girlfriend Ernestine von Fricken’s hometown. They were also the letters from Schumann’s family name.

Sams suggested that the title *Faschingsschwank aus Wien* was Schumann’s invention, so he could simply include “ASCH” and “SCHA” within the same word. In *Carnaval* Schumann transformed the motive from “ASCH” into different variations and adapted it into the form of *commedia dell’arte* in movement 3 “Arlequin,” movement 8 “Sphinxes,” and movement 10 “A.S.C.H.-S.C.H.A.” The motive “ASCH” was also featured in the beginning of “Florestan,” where Schumann also quoted two measures of melody from *Papillons*, while alluding the title which relates to the character in *Flegeljahre*. Within one movement, Schumann referenced two other cycles, and several novels, embodying the intertextuality of Schumann’s music.

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<sup>56</sup> Schumann, *Biefe. Neue Folge*, 492; Eric Sams “The Tonal Analogue in Schumann’s music,” *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association* 98, no. 1 (January 1, 1969): 105, <https://doi-org.www2.lib.ku.edu/10/1093/jrma/96.1.103>.

<sup>57</sup> Sams, “The Tonal Analogue,” 105.

<sup>58</sup> Sams, “The Tonal Analogue,” 109.

Schumann's intellectual approach under the influence from cryptography created his unique imaginary world simulated by the extra-musical elements. The secret messages he hidden throughout his music present performers with potentially infinite possibilities.<sup>59</sup> As Schumann said, "Everything that happens in the world has its effect on me, politics, literature, people; In my own way I reflect on it all, and then I have to give vent to it through the outlet of music."<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Reiman, *Schumann's Piano Cycle*, 93.

<sup>60</sup> Robert Schumann, *Jugendbriefe*, 2nd ed., ed. Clara Schumann (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1886), 245.

## Conclusion

Under the influence of romanticism's ideology, Schumann's music is neither solely abstract nor solely sensuous, but a combination of both. His music not only functions as a tool to express inner feelings, but also as a high-level intellectual and musical language that controls the expressions with a diverse approach. The cipher and code-name that he inserted directly related to a person or a certain feeling was purposefully veiled.

Schumann's music is often described as the equivalent to Jean Paul and Hoffmann's literature. The unique narrative strategies in late eighteenth-century literature was mirrored in Schumann's compositional style. Jean Paul's significant influence on Schumann is obviously presented in the structure of Schumann's music with defamiliarization, digression, and dualism. It separates Schumann from the traditional form, and transforms his music into a disjunctive, contrasting style that transports his audience into a metaphysical world of art. The digressive sections eventually, utilizing the teleological structure, allow the observers to understand and decode each part after seeing the broader piece. In this way, Schumann's approach is similar to that of Schubert. Schumann's obsession with the idea of *Doppelgänger* led him to explore the musically dualistic forces through the use of characteristics and dual tonality in *Kreisleriana*. He also used the Clara Theme as a unified device to connect all 8 movements together, revealing his devotion to Clara.

There are many studies that have focused only on the interpretation of Schumann's piano works, but only a few concentrate on the reason why he would write in this manner. I hope my study can help people better understand Schumann's music by revealing the influence from German literature, ciphers, and other unspoken secrets. We can rediscover the music through this perspective to understand him more as a person and not just a manic composer.



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